

March 27, 2026

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Chair
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services, Education, and
Related Agencies

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
Chair
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education,
and Related Agencies

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services, Education, and
Related Agencies

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education,
and Related Agencies

Dear Chairman Aderholt, Chairwoman Capito, Ranking Member DeLauro, and Ranking Member Baldwin:

On behalf of UnidosUS, I write to urge you to provide \$1 billion for the Title III English Language Acquisition Program and to maintain level funding, consistent with FY2026 enacted levels, for workforce development programs authorized under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) in FY2027 appropriations legislation.

UnidosUS, formerly the National Council of La Raza (NCLR), is the nation's largest Hispanic civil rights and advocacy organization. Since 1968, we have worked to eliminate the barriers that prevent Latinos from reaching their full potential through research, policy advocacy, programs, and a national network of nearly 300 community-based Affiliate organizations.

Our nation's 5.7 million English language learners (ELLs) represent one in ten K-12 public school students, and the majority are U.S.-born citizens. English learners are students ages 3 to 21 enrolled in elementary or secondary school who need greater English proficiency to succeed in school and society. Title III is the only federal program solely dedicated to providing ELL students with the resources they need to learn English and meet the same challenging academic standards as their peers. The program supports evidence-based instruction that integrates English language development with academic content, equips educators through professional development, and promotes family engagement to enhance student outcomes. Research shows that when English learners receive these supports, they can meet – and often exceed – the performance of their native English-speaking peers. A \$1 billion investment would support ELL students in keeping pace with their peers and ensure access to a high-quality education for all students.

Workforce development programs authorized under WIOA are a cornerstone of national competitiveness, connecting millions of Americans each year to apprenticeships, adult education, reentry support, and youth employment opportunities. These investments create pathways to quality jobs and help industries adapt to rapid technological change, an especially critical priority in

today's uncertain economy. Latino workers alone represent nearly 20% of the U.S. labor force, have the highest participation rate of any group, and are projected to comprise nearly 80% of all new workers over the next decade. Yet they continue to bear the brunt of chronic underinvestment in workforce training, as the public workforce system has been asked to do more with fewer resources for decades.

Federal funding for workforce training has reached a historic low as a share of discretionary spending, constraining the system's ability to scale what works – especially for Latino workers. When adequately funded, WIOA programs have proven effective in connecting workers facing the greatest barriers to quality jobs with real wage gains and long-term career mobility. We respectfully request level funding of \$3.98 billion for FY2027.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Eric Rodriguez', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Eric Rodriguez
Senior Vice President
Policy and Advocacy
UnidosUS

cc:

The Honorable Tom Cole, Chair, House Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Susan Collins, Chair, Senate Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Patty Murray, Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Appropriations